NAXOS

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The Romantic Chopin

A Celebration of Chopin's Most Romantic Music

The Romantic Chopin
Frédéric Chopin (1810 - 1849)

Born near Warsaw in 1810, the son of a French émigré and a Polish mother, Chopin won early fame in the relatively limited circles of his native country, before seeking his fortune abroad, in Paris. His departure from Warsaw coincided with the unsuccessful national rising against Russian domination and Chopin found himself in Paris in the company of a number of other Polish exiles. He was able to establish himself as a pianist and as a teacher of the piano, primarily in fashionable society.

For some ten years Chopin enjoyed a liaison with the writer George Sand, but broke with her during the last years of his life, brought to a close by the tuberculosis from which he had long suffered. His compositions, principally for the piano, make a remarkable use of the newly developed instrument, exploring its poetic possibilities while generally avoiding the more obvious ostentation of the Paris school of performers.

Orchestral Music

As a young musician embarking on a career as a pianist, Chopin provided himself with half a dozen works for piano and orchestra, a form for which he later found no necessity. These include two piano concertos, three works based on Polish themes, a Fantasia, a Krakowiak and a Grand polonaise, and a set of variations on a theme by Mozart.

Recommended Recordings

Piano Concertos Nos. 1 & 2
Naxos 8.550123

Piano Concerto No. 1 / Fantaisie / Andante spianato & Grand Polonaise
Naxos 8.550368

Piano Concerto No. 2 / Krakowiak / Mozart Variations
Naxos 8.550369

Chamber Music

Chopin wrote an Introduction and Polonaise for cello and piano for an early patron and towards the end of his life a Cello Sonata. His G minor Piano Trio is a valuable addition to recital repertoire.

Piano Music

Chopin created or developed a number of new forms of piano music, vehicles for his own poetic use of the instrument, with its exploration of nuance, its original harmonies and its discreet but often considerable technical demands. He used the popular form of the Waltz in a score of such compositions, of which the so-called Minute Waltz is probably the best known of many of almost equal familiarity. The Polish dance, the Polonaise, elevated from village to ball-room, provided the basis of another characteristic form, in sixteen such works, written between 1817, when Chopin was seven, and 1846. The best known, among generally familiar works, are the Polonaise in A major, Opus 40 No. 1, the Polonaise in A flat, Opus 53, and the Polonaise-Fantaisie, Opus 61. Other Polish dances used by Chopin include the 62 Mazurkas. The four Ballades are supposedly based on patriotic poems by Chopin's friend Mickiewicz, evocative narrative works with no precise extra-musical association. The 21 Nocturnes continue an evocative form initiated by the Irish pianist John Field. Chopin wrote 26 Preludes, 24 of them completed during an ill-fated winter with George Sand in Mallorca and 27 Studies, of which the Revolutionary Study is perhaps the best known. Other compositions include four Scherzos, expansions of the earlier form into a more extended virtuoso piece, three Sonatas, a Berceuse, a Barcarolle, four Impromptus and a number of other works. The whole body of Chopin's music is of the greatest musical and technical importance, melodies often of operatic inspiration and harmonies and forms of considerable originality.

Recommended Recordings

Ballades / Berceuse / Fantasie etc.
Naxos 8.550508

Etudes Opp. 10 & 25
Naxos 8.550364

Impromptus and Scherzi
Naxos 8.550362

Mazurkas (Complete) Volume 1
Naxos 8.550358

Mazurkas (Complete) Volume 2
Naxos 8.550359

Nocturnes (Complete) Volume 1
Naxos 8.550356

Nocturnes (Complete) Volume 2
Naxos 8.550357

Polonaises (Complete) Volume 1
Naxos 8.550360

Polonaises (Complete) Volume 2
Naxos 8.550361

Preludes (Complete) / Bourrees
Naxos 8.550366

Sonatas Nos.1-3
Naxos 8.550363

Variations / Rondos etc.
Naxos 8.550367

Waltzes (Complete)
Naxos 8.550365

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STEREO

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A CELEBRATION OF CHOPIN'S MOST ROMANTIC MUSIC

Idil Biret, Piano

1	**Etude in G Flat Major, Op. 25, No. 9** (from Naxos 8.550364)	(1:11)
2	**Etude in E Major, Op. 10, No. 3** (from Naxos 8.550364)	(4:35)
3	**Nocturne in E Flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2** (from Naxos 8.550356)	(4:32)
4	**Prelude in E Minor, Op. 28, No. 4** (from Naxos 8.550366)	(2:22)
5	**Mazurka in B Flat Major, Op. 7, No. 1** (from Naxos 8.550358)	(2:40)
6	**Nocturne in D Flat Major, Op. 27, No. 2** (from Naxos 8.550356)	(6:16)
7	**Berceuse in D Flat Major, Op. 57** (from Naxos 8.550508)	(4:41)
8	**Etude in E Flat Minor, Op. 10, No. 6** (from Naxos 8.550364)	(3:37)
9	**Piano Sonata No. 2 in B Flat Minor, Op. 35: Marche funèbre: Lento** (from Naxos 8.550363)	(9:15)
10	**Mazurka in G Minor, Op. 24, No. 1** (from Naxos 8.550358)	(3:12)
11	**Waltz in A Flat Major, Op. 69, No. 2 "Adieu"** (from Naxos 8.550365)	(5:03)
12	**Nocturne in F Sharp Major, Op. 15, No. 2** (from Naxos 8.550356)	(4:04)
13	**Prelude in D Flat Major, Op. 28, No. 15 "Raindrop"** (from Naxos 8.550366)	(5:53)
14	**Mazurka in D Major, Op. 33, No. 2** (from Naxos 8.550358)	(2:35)
15	**Nocturne in F Minor, Op. 55, No. 1** (from Naxos 8.550356)	(4:50)
16	**Waltz in A Minor, Op. 34, No. 2** (from Naxos 8.550365)	(5:34)
17	**Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21: Larghetto** - Czecho-Slovak State Philharmonic Orchestra (Košice) / Robert Stankovsky (from Naxos 8.550369)	(9:29)

(Playing Time: 79:49)

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